

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-03 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-03 INR-10

LAB-01 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SAM-01 NIC-01 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 L-02 NSC-07 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-14

USIA-04 DRC-01 FEA-01 /069 W
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R 090600Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 182

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USEC BRUSSELS 905

US MISSION GENEVA 590

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 6361

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJ: CURRENT SPANISH STRIKE SITUATION

BEGIN SUMMARY: CURRENT AND RECENT LABOR SITUATION HAS INVOLVED VARIOUS STRIKES IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF COUNTRY, SEVERAL INVOLVING LARGE AND IMPORTANT FIRMS, SUCH AS NASTY STRIKE THIS PAST WEEK AT RENAULT PLANT IN VALLADOLID. MOST OF THESE STRIKES HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY ECONOMIC MOTIVES, BUT CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS HAVE IN MOST CASES MOVED IN AND POLITICIZED STRIKES. COMMUNIST WORKERS COMMISSIONS CONTINUE HOPING FOR THEIR LONG-SOUGHT NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE, BUT THIS HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO MATERIALIZE. GOVT HAS EXTENDED RECENT ARRESTS OF POLITICAL EXTREMISTS AND COMMUNISTS TO LABOR FIELD. SSO REMAINS IMPOTENT, AND LABOR MINISTER HAS CALLED FOR MODIFIED RIGHT TO STRIKE.

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PROSPECTS ARE FOR MORE AND INTENSIFIED STRIKES AND LABOR

AGITATION DURING COMING MONTHS, WITH ATTENTION SHIFTING IN SPRING TO SSO PLANT-K LEVEL ELECTIONS, WHICH ALL OPPOSITION CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS HOPE TO PARTICIPATE IN WITH HOPES OF EVENTUALLY SUBVERTING SSO FROM WITHIN.
END SUMMARY

1. DURING PAST FEW WEEKS, STRIKES OF DIFFERENT DURATION HAVE ERUPTED IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SPAIN IN WHAT PROMISES BE ONE OF MOST STRIKE-PRONE AUTUMNS IN RECENT YEARS.

2. STRIKES, SOME ONLY INVOLVING ALTERNATING INTERRUPTIONS OF SEVERAL HOURS AND OTHERS INVOLVING PROTRACTED PERIODS OF A WEEK OR MORE, HAVE OCCURRED AT SUCH DIVERSE FIRMS AND LOCATIONS AS AMONG (1) 3,500 WORKERS AT TWO GENERAL ELECTRIC PLANTS IN THE BILBAO AREA; (2) DIVERSE GROUPS OF 2,000-3,000 WORKERS AT THE 20,000 WORKER SEAT AUTO-MOBILE PLANT IN BARCELONA; (3) 2,000 WORKERS AT THE ROBERTO BOSCH ELECTRONICS FACTORY IN MADRID; (4) 4,000 WORKERS OF THE HISPANO-OLIVETTI PLANT IN BARCELONA; (5) SEVERAL HUNDRED MEDICAL INTERNS AT NINE HOSPITALS THROUGHOUT SPAIN (INCLUDING THE FOUR PRINCIPAL MADRID HOSPITALS); (6) THE PRINT SHOP WORKERS AT "ABC", ONE OF SPAIN'S LEADING NEWSPAPERS; AND (7) THE 13,000 WORKERS AT FIVE RENAULT AUTOMOBILE PLANTS IN VALLADOLID AND SEVILLE.

3. PERHAPS LONGEST AND NASTIEST STRIKE HAS BEEN AT FOUR RENAULT PLANTS IN VALLADOLID (SUPPORTED BY ONE RENAULT PLANT IN SEVILLE). THERE THE STRIKE, WHICH WAS PRECIPITATED BY A SUDDEN CHANGE IN WORK NORMS BY MANAGEMENT AND BY THREE DEATHS OF WORKERS IN WORK ACCIDENTS DURING PAST MONTH, RESULTED IN SYMPATHY STRIKES BY WORKERS IN SEVERAL OTHER VALLADOLID FACTORIES, IN CONFRONTATIONS ON SUCCESSIVE DAYS LAST WEEK WITH POLICE ON CITY STREETS WHICH RESULTED IN A DOZEN ARRESTS AND A SIMILAR NUMBER OF INJURED, AND IN A MANAGEMENT LOCKOUT IN RETALIATION FOR THE STRIKE, WHICH LOCKOUT, AFTER A WEEK IN FORCE, IS SUPPOSEDLY BEING LIFTED TODAY.

4. IT APPEARS REASONS FOR CURRENT STRIKE WAVE ARE PRIMARILY ECONOMIC IN NATURE. RAPID RISE IN COST OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LIVING WHICH MAY EXCEED 20 PERCENT IN 1974 IS PROBABLY BIGGEST SINGLE CONTRIBUTING FACTOR. OTHER FACTORS ARE: (1) THE ABANDONMENT BY THE GOVT TWO MONTHS AGO OF MANDATORY WAGE INCREASE GUIDELINE. WHICH WERE IN EFFECT FOR OVER FIVE YEARS; (2) FACT THAT BETWEEN NOW AND DEC 31 MOST MAJOR TWO-YEAR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONTRACTS FALL DUE FOR RENEGOTIATION; AND (3) THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED THIS YEAR AS A RESULT OF

THE ENERGY CRISIS, WHICH IS STARTING TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON PRODUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT IN CERTAIN SECTORS AND INDUSTRIES.

5. DESPITE ECONOMIC BASIS FOR MOST, IF NOT ALL, THESE STRIKES, CLANDESTINE LABOR OPPOSITION GROUPS HAVE IN ALMOST ALL CASES EITHER BEEN INVOLVED FROM BEGINNING OR MOVED IN FAST AND POLITICIZED STRIKES ONCE THEY COMMENCED. THERE IS ALSO EVIDENT A GREATER SOPHISTICATION AND COORDINATION OF VARIOUS CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS INVOLVED IN THESE STRIKES THAN IN PAST. IN MANY THESE STRIKES, E.G., IN BARCELONA AREA, COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS IS REPORTEDL A PRINCIPAL POLITICAL ELEMENT, BUT IN OTHERS, E.G. RENAULT STRIKE IN VALLADOLID, NON-COMMUNIST GROUPS SUCH AS CATHOLIC EXTREMIST ORT AND MODERATE USO, APPEAR TO HAVE PLAYED PRINCIPAL ROLE.

6. COMMUNIST DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS GOAL THIS FALL, AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, IS NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE. IN JUNE, WORKERS COMMISSIONS BEGAN PLANNING FOR A GENERAL STRIKE IN OCTOBER. NON-COMMUNIST CLANDESTINE GROUPS DO NOT SHARE THIS GOAL, AND IT GENERALLY AGREED NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE FOR SPECIFIED DATE NOT FEASIBLE IN SPAIN UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS. COMMUNISTS NOW BACK-TRACKING SOMEWHAT AND CALLING FOR "NATIONAL STRIKE" WHICH THEY WOULD CONSIDER AS COMPRISING DIFFERENT STRIKES IN DIFFERENT LOCALITIES IN CHAIN REACTION SEQUENCE, BUT EVEN THIS GOAL NOT PRACTICAL. BEST THEY CAN HOPE FOR IS TAKE ADVANTAGE INDIVIDUAL STRIKES OVER ECONOMIC MOTIVES AS AND WHERE THEY OCCUR, WHICH STRIKES SHOULD BE PLENTIFUL ENOUGH THIS SEASON.

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